

CHAPTEE IX *THE LATER*
HISTORY OF THE LOLLARDS, 1400-1520

THE LOLLARDS IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. THEIR INFLUENCE
 ON THE REFORMATION

THOUGH we have now come to the end of the Age of Wycliffe, the reader would perhaps be sceptical as to its important effects on the course of English history, unless he had information about the later influence and ultimate destiny of the Lollard movement. The present chapter may partially supply this need.

Although the reign of Henry the Fourth was signalised by the increased bitterness of both parties and the commencement of internecine war, there was no turn in the tide of heresy. On two occasions the representatives of the shires, assuming as usual the leadership of the Lower House, proposed that the King should seize the temporalities of the Church and apply them to relieve taxation, to aid the poor, and to endow new lords and knights.³ This was a sign of increased Lollard influence over the gentry, for they had never advanced any such proposal in the days when John of Gaunt attempted to stir Parliament against Church property with a view to his own tortuous plans. It must have been a genuine expression of opinion, for such motions were no longer instigated by any party in the Lords, and they were actually discouraged by the Court. In retaliation for these proposals the Church party, by the aid of the royal family, passed statutes for the suppression of heresy. The consent, or at least the acquiescence, of the Commons was twice secured for such

¹ Wais-, ii. 266. *Annales Senrici* (B. S. John of Trokelow), 393 ; Wals« ii. 282-3,